

Fall 8-15-2012

## ENG 4903-001: Young Adult Literature

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English 4903-001

Fall 2012

Young Adult Literature

TTR 3:30-4:45 Coleman Hall 3290

Prof. John David Moore

**Office:** Coleman Hall 3771

**Office Hours:** <sup>TR 0930-</sup>~~10:00~~-12:15; 2:00-

**\*E-mail:** [jdmoore@eiu.edu](mailto:jdmoore@eiu.edu)

3:15 & by Appointment

**Textbook**

*Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism*, Michael Cart. 2011

**Literature**

1974 *The Chocolate War*, Robert Cormier

1994 *Am I Blue?* (Short story anthology, multi-genre), Marion Bauer (ed.)

1997, Karen Hesse

1999 *Monster*, Walter Dean Myers

2002 *Feed*, M.T. Anderson

2005 *The Book Thief*, Markus Zusak

2006 *American Born Chinese*, Gene Yang

2007 *The Arrival*, Shaun Tan

2007 *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Sherman Alexie

2008 *The Hunger Games*, Suzanne Collins

2009 *Marcelo in the Real World*, Francisco X. Stork

*\*The English faculty no longer has land-line phones. Contact me by e-mail before 9 pm if you want a response before sometime the next day.*

## **Self-Selected Works**

Recent YA Works; Pre-1960s Teen Fiction; Non-Fiction; Poetry; Short Stories; Series Books; Graphic Novels; Crossover Literature

## **Course Description and Objectives**

This semester we will be focusing critical attention upon a wide range of literature created mostly since 1990 for readers once known as "teenagers" and now generally identified as "young adults." We will explore a variety of genres within this increasingly vast literary category – realism, fantasy, poetry, fictional memoir, graphic novel – in order to analyze how these works reveal varied perceptions of adolescence and address the desires and concerns of their intended readers. In addition to critical attention to literary qualities and rhetorical approaches of those who write and illustrate young adult works, we will examine such evaluative criteria as audience appeal, developmental suitability, and pedagogical utility. We will also attend to the often contentious debates about literary quality and examine the challenges and sometimes censorship of some of these works by adult "guardians of the young."

At the end of this semester you should possess a wider conception of this literature – a sense of its past, present and its possible future developments; an ability to read Young Adult Literature within social and cultural contexts – and a practical familiarity with resources and tools employed by those who work within this field.

## **Course Calendar**

### **Week I Aug. 21-23**

T     Introductions. Definitions. Historical/Cultural Background. The invention young adulthood and its literature.

TR    Reading: Robert Cormier, *The Chocolate War*. Michael Cart, Chapters 1&2

## **Week II Aug.28-30**

T Reading: Cormier

Presentation: Young Adult School Stories: Then and Now

TR Reading: Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.  
Michael Cart, Chapter 3, pp. 41-48.

## **Week III Sept. 4-6**

T Reading: Alexie.

Presentation: Native Americans in YA Literature: Then and Now

TR Reading: Alexie.

## **Week IV Sept. 11-13**

T Reading: Gene Yang, *American Born Chinese*. Michael Cart, Chapter 12.

TR Reading: Yang.

Presentation: Graphic Novels for Young Adults

**Last day to hand in a brief summary of your self-selected book for the researched review essay**

## **Week V Sept. 18-20**

T Reading: Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*. Michael Cart, Chapter 9.

TR Reading: Tan.

Presentation: YA Literature and the Immigrant Experience

## **Week VI Sept 25-27**

T Reading: Walter Dean Myers, *Monster*. Alexander Nazaryan, "Against Walter Dean Myers and the dumbing down of literature." (Handout)

TR Reading: Myers.

Presentation: African-American Realism for Young Adults

**Week VII** Oct. 2-4

T     Reading: Karen Hesse, *Out of the Dust*.

TR    Reading: Hesse.

Presentation: The Place of Poetry in YA Literature

**Week VIII** Oct. 9-11

T     Reading: Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*.

TR    Reading: Zusak.    **Researched Review Essay Due**

**Week IX** Oct. 16-18

T     Reading: Zusak.

Presentation: Beyond Anne Frank. World War II and Holocaust Fiction and Non-Fiction for Young Adults

TR    Reading: *Am I Blue* (Selections to be announced). Michael Cart, Chapter 11.

**Week X** Oct. 23-25

T     Reading: *Am I Blue*.

Presentation: The Rise of LGBT Literature for Young Adults

TR    Reading: Francisco X. Stork, *Marcelo in the Real World*.

**Week XI** Oct. 30-Nov. 1

T     Reading: Stork.

Presentation: The Representation of Young Adults with Disabilities in YA Literature

TR    Reading: Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*.

**Week XII** Nov. 6-8

T     Reading: Collins.

TR Reading: Collins.  
Presentation: The Rise of Dystopian YA Literature

**Week XIII** Nov. 13-15

T Reading: M.T. Anderson, *Feed*. "Sight," A short film by Eran May-Raz and Daniel Lazo.

TR Reading: Anderson.  
Presentation: Trends in YA Fantasy and Science Fiction

**Thanksgiving Break**

**Week XIV** Nov. 27-29

Activities to be announced

**Week XV** Dec. 4-6

T Activities to be announced

TR LAST CLASS DAY

**Course Requirements/Assignments**

**Regular Written Reading Responses: Observations or Discussion Questions**

For each class session you will turn in a typewritten response that may be in the form of a developed question or one or two observations on the assigned reading that invite class discussion, analysis and reflection. These must be one page minimum and will be graded on the basis of their clarity, usefulness and evidence of attentive and thoughtful reading of the assigned texts. Each class session will begin with one student reading his or her response aloud to start discussion. You will receive grades for these responses twice before mid-term and twice before the end of the semester.

**Researched Review Essay**

A formal essay (800 words minimum) directed to an interested professional audience in which you describe, contextualize and evaluate a self-selected early (pre-1970) example of adolescent literature. The essay will examine the role of this text in the historical and cultural development of Young Adult literature, and how it compares to more contemporary works in the genre. This essay will be due at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> week of classes. A brief summary of the book you have selected for this topic will be due for approval no later than Thursday, Sept. 13. More specific details will be forthcoming.

### **Group/Team Class Presentation**

Throughout the semester groups of three and teams of two, will present 20 minute "mini-classes" on a topic related to the assigned reading. These topics will first of all introduce at least two self-selected books that tie-in with the assigned reading but will also introduce matters of critical response, controversy, and cultural context. Clear, typewritten outlines of your presentation will be turned in for grading.

### **Final Exam/In-Class Essay**

An open book essay examining three works we have read this term in relation to a theme, literary technique or particular issue of your choice (subject to approval). You may bring an outline.

### **Participation**

This includes the effort you put into your presentation and delivery of thoughtful reading responses, but more importantly it has to do with the regularity of your day to day contributions to discussion, answering and asking questions, responding thoughtfully to the contributions of others, feeling free to express disagreement, and paying respectful attention to the discussion taking place in class. Grades will be adjusted up or down on the basis of participation.

### **\*\*Special Requirement for Graduate Students**

Instead of the final in-class essay exam, Graduate Students will produce a "research-enriched" final paper preceded by a two page proposal due by mid-term.

*\*\*This does not include post-baccalaureate students seeking teacher certification or non-degree students*

## **Grades**

The averaged grade for the reading responses, the review essay, presentation and final In-Class essay (or graduate paper) all count equally and will be averaged and adjusted according to degree of participation to arrive at the final semester grade. *Grades will not be curved.* Grading is on a four point scale: A 4.0-3.6; B 3.5-2.5; C 2.4-1.4; D 1.3- 0.3; F 0.2-0.0.

## **Policies, Rules, Regulations**

- 1.) Late Work: No late work will be accepted unless you have made acceptable arrangements with me BEFORE the due date. "Before" means at least 24 hour notice.
- 2.) **You must complete all major assignments to pass the course.**
- 3.) Attendance: Obviously required. Four *un*-excused absences will result in the loss of half a letter grade, eight un-excused absences will result in loss of a whole letter grade, ten unexcused absences result in loss of one and one-half letter grades. If you accumulate more than ten absences, excused or not, you should consider dropping the course since you will half missed roughly a third or more of the semester and shouldn't expect anything better than a D should you remain in the class. If you need to miss class due to illness, a university event or other legitimately excusable reason, you should notify me as soon as possible and be prepared to provide documentation of the situation. (Otherwise I won't be able to keep track of how often your grandmother dies).
- 4.) Paper Grading: Since this is a senior/graduate student level course, I must assume an advanced command of writing mechanics/grammar, and



acceptable usage. Ten or more errors in these areas within the first two pages of a paper means I stop reading and the paper gets a D.

- 5.) Plagiarism: English Department Statement on Plagiarism: “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – ‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’ – has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.” In less severe forms plagiarism may involve problematic citations and paraphrases that, though they suggest honest attempts to satisfy academic standards, will require revision before a grade can be assigned. Until documentation is corrected, the assignment's grade will remain a zero. NOTE: Consultants at **The Writing Center** can help you with the mechanics of correct quotation, paraphrase, summary, and citation of primary and secondary sources. They will also be happy to work with you on any other writing difficulties that may be threatening the acceptability of your work. Call for an appointment (581-5929) or drop in (CH3110) and be sure to bring materials – assignment sheet, drafts, copies of sources – with you. The Writing Center's hours are Monday through Thursday 9 am – 3 pm & 6—9 pm, and 9 am – 1 pm Fridays.
- 6.) MLA Style: Use MLA (Modern Language Association) style for the layout of your paper and for the documentation on your Works Cited page, and for the in-text citations referring readers to this list.
- 7.) Disabilities: Students with documented disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible so we can work out appropriate accommodations.
- 8.) Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English department professors with the yellow form: "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach." These are available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Donna Binns (CH3851). The sooner you get these to your professors the better.